

Athenian Philosophers

- sought absolute truths about humankind
- basically anti-religious; anti-democracy; approved of science
- observation & rationalization explained reality

Socrates

- he did, and taught others to, question everything; esp. religion, govt, politics, behavior
- Socratic Method - answer a question w/ a question
- did believe humans had special qualities, life should be spent pursuing those qualities
- never wrote anything down

Plato

- Socrates most famous student
- state was more important than the individual
- service to community was more important than personal goals
- too much freedom led to social disorder
- respected Sparta
- his major works are written as conversations between Socrates and someone else (Dialogues, The Republic)
- he attempted to describe what a utopia (perfect) city would be like; his ideas were...
 - praised as a work of political theory
 - criticized as a work that says freedom should be given up

-irony of Aristotle...

the greatest defender of his
earth-centered universe theory
was...

the Roman Catholic Church
1700 years later

ironic because Christians
usually didn't like things
from polytheistic pagan
societies like Athens

Aristotle

- founder of biology and zoology
 - his theory of an earth-centered universe stood for over 1700 years
 - his most famous student was Alexander the Great
- importance
- 1st major challenge to religion and its theories of faith and blind acceptance
 - these philosophers became role-models for other historical people & time periods that challenged religious authority
 - they demonstrate the problems of Athens "democracy", the govt. feared them